

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action that was mailed October 18, 2002. The form of this Amendment is the Revised Amendment Format that was announced by the Deputy Commissioner for Patent Examination Policy, Steven Kunin on January 31, 2003. The guidelines for this Revised Amendment Format were found on the "Pre-OG Notices" page of the United States Patent and Trademark Office website. The enclosed Amendment is believed to be in compliance with the Revised Amendment Format in light of those guidelines and the waiver of 37 C.F.R. §1.121.

Rejection of claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1-7, 16-19 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Debbage et al. ("Debbage"). It is alleged that Debbage discloses an apparatus for regenerating a catalyst absorber after contact with a combustion exhaust and that the regeneration gas may be comprised of hydrogen and carbon dioxide (citing column 5, lines 14-15). See Office Action, page 2, paragraph number 2. In addition, it is alleged in conjunction with the rejection of claims under §103(a), addressed in detail below, that Debbage teaches the production of carbon dioxide *from a gasification unit* and reducing the amount of pollutants produced from the process. See Office Action, page 3, paragraph number 4. Applicant respectfully disagrees that Debbage, contains any teaching or suggestion that the regeneration gas, regardless of its composition, should be produced in a gasification unit.

Debbage discloses that the regeneration gas used has a specific composition of hydrogen, carbon dioxide and steam. See column 5, lines 14-15. The reference further discloses that this regeneration gas is prepared in a two step process wherein natural gas is first catalytically reformed with air to produce a gas consisting of about 20% carbon monoxide, 40% hydrogen and 40% nitrogen. In the second step, this gas is mixed with steam and passed over a shift catalyst to produce the final regeneration gas.

See column 5, lines 23-34. There is no teaching or suggestion in Debbage that the regeneration gas should be a syngas produced in a gasification unit as is recited in Applicant's claim 1. In fact, there is not a single reference in Debbage to a gasification unit or any suggestion that it might be desirable to integrate the regeneration process disclosed in Debbage with a gasification unit. As such, Debbage fails to anticipate each and every element of claim 1.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-7, 16-19 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Debbage.

Rejection of claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 8-15 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Debbage as applied to claims 1-7, 16-19 and 21, and further in view of Courty et al. ("Courty").

It is acknowledged in the Action that Debbage does not teach or suggest a process wherein synthesis gas is cleaned in an acid gas removal unit. However, it is alleged that Courty teaches a process for purifying a gas from a gasification unit containing H₂S and CO₂. It is then further alleged that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the teachings of Debbage with the teachings of Courty because one would have expected a gasification process, which includes reducing pollutants such as H₂S such as taught by Courty, to be similarly useful and applicable to a gasification process for reducing pollutants as taught by Debbage. Applicant respectfully disagrees for the reasons that Debbage does not teach any gasification process or more specifically, a gasification process for reducing pollutants.

As discussed above, Debbage does not teach or suggest a process for regenerating a catalyst absorber with syngas produced in a gasification unit. There is nothing in the disclosure of Debbage that relates to the production of syngas in a gasification unit, or moreover, the use of such a syngas to regenerate a catalyst absorber. Furthermore, Courty does not teach or suggest that a cleaned syngas should be used to regenerate a catalyst absorber. Rather, the focus of Courty is a process for improving the

purification of hydrogen from syngas using a zinc oxide bed, the improvement being the use of specific absorption materials in combination with the zinc oxide. There is no teaching or suggestion in Courty that the purified hydrogen derived from the syngas should be directed to a spent catalyst absorber for use in regenerating that spent catalyst absorber.

In that the Debbage reference is wholly unrelated to gasification and the production of syngas in a gasification unit, and because Courty does not teach or suggest that a cleaned syngas should be directed to a spent catalyst absorber for use in regenerating that spent catalyst absorber, there is nothing in either of these references that would have motivated one skilled in the art to have modified the catalyst regeneration process of Debbage with any of the features of the syngas cleaning process taught by Courty.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 8-15 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Debbage in view of Courty.

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All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection are believed to have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Frank C. Turner", is written over a horizontal line.

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